

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL</b>	
	<b>Chapter 3: Intake</b>	<b>Effective Date:</b> November 1, 2005
	<b>Section 12: Linking CA/N Reports to Open Investigations (Assessments)</b>	<b>Version:</b> 1

## POLICY

- When appropriate, the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will electronically link new CA/N intake reports to investigations (assessments) that have been open 30 days or less **and** involve the same perpetrator **and** the same victim **and** the same/similar allegations.
- When a CA/N intake report is linked to an existing investigation (assessment), a separate investigation (assessment) will not be conducted, although appropriate steps will be taken within the current investigation (assessment) to assure the safety and well-being of the child.
- DCS will not link CA/N intake reports to existing investigations (assessments) when it is necessary to conduct a separate, thorough investigation (assessment) in order to assure the safety and well-being of a child.

### Code References

- [IC 31-33-7-4: Written Reports](#)

## PROCEDURE

*Upon receiving a report of child abuse/neglect that involves a family for which there is an open investigation (assessment), the intake worker will:*

1. Check ICWIS to see if the investigation (assessment) has been open 30 days or less and the new report involves the same alleged perpetrator, same victim and same/similar allegations.
2. Using critical thinking skills, make a recommendation about whether it is in the **best interest of the alleged child victim's safety and well-being** to link the new report with the open investigation (assessment).

*The intake supervisor will:*

1. Make a final decision about whether the report will be linked.
2. If determined that the report **will not** be linked, follow the remaining procedures in separate policy, [Supervisory Review of CA/N Intake Reports](#).
3. If the report **will** be linked, and if the a CA/N intake report has already been created in ICWIS, follow the appropriate steps to link the intake report to the open investigation (assessment).
4. If a CA/N intake report has not yet been created in ICWIS (i.e., the report exists in hard copy only), direct the intake worker to create a temporary contact within the open investigation (assessment) to document the details of the CA/N report. *Note: An ICWIS*

*CA/N Intake Report must then be created and linked within 24 hours of the conclusion of the initial call from the reporter (see Step 4 above).*

5. Confirm receipt of the linked report by the FCM assigned to the investigation (assessment). Ideally, this will be done by making direct contact with the FCM either in-person or via phone. In situations where this is not practical, ensure receipt through a standardized delivery process such as a high-priority in-box etc. *Note: If a temporary contact was created, the FCM must be alerted.*

*Upon receipt of a linked CA/N intake report, the FCM assigned to the investigation (assessment) will:*

1. Carefully review the information on the linked report. Give the utmost consideration to the safety and well-being of the alleged child victim. Seek supervisory input as necessary to determine appropriate actions.
2. Take all appropriate actions, which could include, but are not limited to, contacting the family to discuss the new information and conducting a new safety assessment and/or risk assessment.

## **PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

### **When it is Appropriate to Link a New CA/N Report**

A new CA/N report may be linked when it is not necessary to conduct a separate, thorough investigation (including all required interviews) to assure the safety and well-being of the child. Example: DCS receives a new report of a “dirty house.” The family has been involved for the past 20 days in an investigation (assessment) for similar allegations. All interviews have been completed by the FCM, as well as a home visit, safety assessment, risk assessment, and strengths and needs assessment. Rather than start over with a new investigation (assessment) and re-do all interviews, etc., the FCM and his/her supervisor should discuss the specifics of the situation as they relate to the safety of the child. It may be determined that the most appropriate action would be for the FCM to speak with the parents, make face-to-face contact with the child, and visit the home to assess the environment. It may not be necessary to interview anyone else. When used appropriately, linking can avoid duplication of effort. However, linking should never occur at the expense of child safety and well-being. When in doubt, do not link.

## **FORMS AND TOOLS**

- N/A

## **RELATED INFORMATION**

### **Collateral Contacts**

The above policy does not apply to collateral contacts who call DCS with additional information about an open investigation (assessment). See practice guidance in separate policy, [Receiving Calls \(Overview\)](#) for details on routing and documenting collateral information.